

States House of Representatives has reviewed the facts and determined that the 2020 Belarus presidential election was neither free nor fair, and that Alyaksandr Lukashenka cannot and must not be recognized as Belarus's legitimate president.

The resolution also strongly condemns the heinous human rights violations that have been committed by Belarusian authorities and underlines that Belarus is a sovereign nation, whose people have the right to self-determination.

As chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Energy, the Environment and Cyber, I held a hearing in March, where we heard firsthand from presidential candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya about the unprecedented violence and verbal, physical, emotional, and sexual assault of peaceful protestors. In their fight for democracy, the Belarusian people have endured unprecedented repression and many protestors have been left severely wounded, and at least eight have been murdered by this reprehensible regime.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is a vital signal of support for the democratic movement in Belarus, that their sacrifice will not be forgotten, and their calls for recognition will not go unanswered.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution and send a clear message that the United States is paying close attention to the human rights situation in Belarus and will continue to support the people of Belarus in their fight for a new, free, and fair election.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Global Human Rights; and also the author of the Belarus Democracy, Human Rights, and Sovereignty Act that was signed into law last year.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for yielding and for his leadership, as well as Chairman MEEKS. I especially want to thank Chairman KEATING for authoring this very, very important resolution and for his hearing that he held in March on the situation in Belarus.

Madam Speaker, the resolution condemns Alyaksandr Lukashenka's ongoing and ever-worsening brutality and crackdown on peaceful protestors.

As my colleagues know, the leading opposition presidential candidate, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who almost certainly won the election in August and helped form the Coordination Council as a means to seek a peaceful transition of power, needs our consistent and robust support and encouragement.

Today, Ms. Tsikhanouskaya is in exile in Lithuania, where she continues to rally the Belarusian people and the world and to demand democracy and human rights for her nation, no matter how long it takes.

More than 8 months have passed since the stolen August presidential election, and about 5 months since President Trump signed the Belarus Democracy, Human Rights, and Sovereignty Act of 2020, which I authored.

Let me point out to my colleagues that I first authored the Belarus Democracy Act in the year 2004. It was enacted into law and reauthorized in 2006 and 2011. What it did was focus on denying visas to human rights abusers and made people who are singled out ineligible for participating in our economy.

In retaliation, I was told I could not visit Belarus. I was denied a visa repeatedly. I finally got there twice and raised human rights issues with Lukashenka himself.

Let me just say that a resolution like this has real impact. Just last week, as a result of an outcry from human rights organizations, the government released Tatsiana Hatsura-Yavorska, the director of the Watch Docs Film Festival in Belarus, and they dropped the charges because of the outcry.

Again, I want to thank Mr. KEATING, the chairman, for doing this.

Let me remind my colleagues, too, that the Russians continue to play a very, very destructive role in the country. This past week alone, Russian authorities detained Yuras Zyankovich, a Belarusian lawyer and U.S. citizen.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MEIJER), a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. MEIJER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 124, a resolution to support the people of Belarus in their efforts against corruption and kleptocracy.

On August 9, 2020, Belarus held a presidential election marred by credible reports of widespread election manipulation. Not surprisingly, the Belarusian dictator, Alyaksandr Lukashenka, who has ruled with an iron fist for nearly three decades, commanded an authoritarian 80 percent of the vote.

Since August, Belarusians have taken to the streets peacefully to express their desire for self-determination. Instead of heeding their calls, the regime has responded with extreme violence, arbitrary detention, torture, and other systematic violations of human rights.

This resolution sends a clear message that we in Congress support the Belarusian people and their aspirations for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote from all of my colleagues. Passage of this resolution will send a message that we in Congress stand against the violent crackdown of the Lukashenka regime and stand with the people of Belarus.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Today, the people of Belarus know that they are not alone, that they have the support of the United States Congress and the American people.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I join with Ranking Member MCCAUL that this resolution makes it clear that the United States will not be silent on human rights violations as perpetrated by the illegitimate Lukashenko regime and we stand with the Belarusian people in their peaceful fight for democracy. I hope all join in supporting this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 124, as amended.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE ACT OF 2021

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 965) to establish a comprehensive United States Government initiative to build the capacity of young leaders and entrepreneurs in Africa, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 965

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Young African Leaders Initiative Act of 2021" or "YALI Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Young African Leaders Initiative, launched in 2010, is a signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders;

(2) Africa is a continent of strategic importance and it is vital for the United States to support strong and enduring partnerships with the next generation of African leaders; and

(3) the United States Government should prioritize investments to build the capacity of emerging young African leaders in sub-Saharan Africa, including through efforts to enhance leadership skills, encourage entrepreneurship, strengthen public administration and the role of civil society, and connect young African leaders continentally and

globally across the private, civic, and public sectors.

SEC. 3. YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS INITIATIVE PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established in the Department of State the Young African Leaders Initiative (“YALI”) program.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The YALI program shall seek to build the capacity of young African leaders in sub-Saharan Africa in the areas of business, civic engagement, or public administration, including through efforts to—

(1) support young African leaders by offering professional development, training, and networking opportunities, particularly in the areas of leadership, innovation, civic engagement, elections, human rights, entrepreneurship, good governance, and public administration; and

(2) provide increased economic and technical assistance to young African leaders to promote economic growth and strengthen ties between United States and African businesses.

(c) **FELLOWSHIPS.**—The YALI program shall award fellowships under the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders program to young African leaders ages 18 to 35 who have demonstrated strong capabilities in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service, and leadership, and who have had a positive impact in their communities, organizations, or institutions.

(d) **REGIONAL LEADERSHIP CENTERS.**—The YALI program shall seek to establish regional leadership centers in sub-Saharan Africa to offer training to young African leaders ages 18 to 35 who have demonstrated strong capabilities in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service and leadership, and who have had a positive impact in their communities, organizations, or institutions.

(e) **ACTIVITIES.**—

(1) **UNITED STATES-BASED ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator for the United States Agency for International Development and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall oversee all United States-based activities carried out under the YALI program, including the following:

(A) The participation of Mandela Washington fellows in a six-week Leadership Institute at a United States university or college in business, civic engagement, or public management, including academic sessions, site visits, professional networking opportunities, leadership training, community service, and organized cultural activities.

(B) The participation by Mandela Washington fellows in an annual Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit, to provide such Fellows the opportunity to meet with United States leaders from the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

(2) **AFRICA-BASED ACTIVITIES.**—The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator for the United States Agency for International Development and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, should continue to support YALI programs in sub-Saharan Africa, including the following:

(A) Access to continued leadership training and other professional development opportunities for Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders alumni upon their return to their home countries, including online courses, technical assistance, and access to funding.

(B) Training for young African leaders at regional leadership centers established in accordance with subsection (d), and through online and in-person courses offered by such centers.

(C) Opportunities for networking and engagement with—

(i) other alumni of the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders;

(ii) alumni of programs at regional leadership centers established in accordance with subsection (d); and

(iii) United States and like-minded diplomatic missions, business leaders, and others as appropriate.

(3) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—To carry out this subsection, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies shall seek to partner with the private sector to pursue public-private partnerships, leverage private sector expertise, expand networking opportunities, and identify funding opportunities as well as fellowship and employment opportunities for participants in the YALI program.

(f) **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development and the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan for implementing the YALI program, including the following:

(1) A description of clearly defined program goals, targets, and planned outcomes for each year and for the duration of implementation of the program.

(2) A strategy to monitor and evaluate the program and progress made toward achieving such goals, targets, and planned outcomes.

(3) A strategy to ensure the program is promoting United States foreign policy goals in Africa, including ensuring that the program is clearly branded and paired with robust public diplomacy efforts.

(g) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees and publish in a publicly accessible, internet-based form, a report on the following:

(1) The progress made toward achieving the goals, targets, and planned outcomes described in subsection (f)(1), including an overview of the program implemented in the previous year and an estimated number of beneficiaries.

(2) An assessment of how the YALI program is contributing to and promoting United States-Africa relations, particularly in areas of increased private sector investment, trade promotion, support to civil society, improved public administration, and fostering entrepreneurship and youth empowerment.

(3) Recommendations for improvements or changes to the program and implementation plan, if any, that would improve their effectiveness during subsequent years of implementation of the program.

(h) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(i) **SUNSET.**—The requirements of this section shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 965.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 965, the YALI Act of 2021, introduced by Representatives KAREN BASS and CHRIS SMITH.

Since 2010 the Young African Leaders Initiative has been building the next generation of Africa's youth to lead the way in civic engagement, entrepreneurship, and business development.

We must remember that by 2050, almost one-third of the world's population will be in Africa, and the United States must continue to forge strong ties with our African partners and cultivate its youth for a future of principled leadership.

By helping Africa's young leaders, YALI remains an important avenue for promoting U.S. foreign policy goals in Africa. It will be key in strengthening our partnerships with African countries that are working to create the pathway for Africa's youth to make positive and enduring impacts on their communities.

If passed, H.R. 965 will provide a strong mandate for the implementation and congressional oversight of YALI and its key initiatives, including the U.S.-based Mandela Washington Fellowship and the Regional Leadership Centers established throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

This, too, is a very important bill. I support it and urge my colleagues to do the same. With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. WAGNER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 965, the Young African Leaders Initiative Act, led by Representative BASS and Representative SMITH.

YALI provides fellowship opportunities at U.S. universities and other training programs at Regional Leadership Centers throughout sub-Saharan Africa on leadership skills, entrepreneurship, and effective public administration.

Not only is this an investment in future generations of African leaders, but this is also effective diplomacy. At a time when the Chinese Communist Party is ramping up exchange programs across the continent and establishing Confucius Institutes, programs like YALI are critical to providing alternate opportunities.

I urge my colleagues to support this important measure. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the distinguished president of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and esteemed member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise on behalf of Ms. BASS, the author of this legislation, the Young African Leaders Initiative Act of 2021.

The chairman has described the bill. This is an important piece of legislation, as we help try to nourish and develop the next generation of African leadership.

This is an important initiative for the United States to build on those ties, to build those bridges. I commend Congresswoman BASS for her leadership on the YALI program and for this legislation. I urge its passage. I will include the full statement of Ms. BASS in the RECORD.

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I will just say quickly thanks to Representatives BASS and CHRIS SMITH. This will help build the next generation of Africa's youth. I hope all my colleagues will join me in voting for this very important bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 965, the Young African Leaders Initiative Act of 2021, introduced by my good friend and Chairwoman of the Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights Subcommittee, Congresswoman KAREN BASS. Her leadership both on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and on this bill is unparalleled, and I am honored to speak on her behalf today.

I also wish to thank Chairman MEEKS and ranking Member MCCAUL for bringing this important legislation to the House floor.

The YALI Act of 2021, is a bipartisan bill that seeks to build the capacity of young African leaders in Africa in the areas of civic engagement, entrepreneurship, and business development by:

Offering professional development and a global network to share expertise, including in the areas of civic leadership, elections, human rights, good governance, and public management;

Providing increased economic and technical assistance to young leaders and entrepreneurs; and strengthening business and economic ties between the United States and the continent;

Awarding Mandela Washington Fellowships to young leaders who have had a positive impact in their communities and demonstrated strong capabilities in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service, and leadership;

Establishing regional leadership centers in sub-Saharan Africa allowing young leaders to strengthen their skills and aptitude in entrepreneurship, innovation, public service, and leadership.

The YALI program has two vital components that will be carried out by participants in the program. The U.S.-based component led by the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Administrator for USAID will include the following:

The Mandela Washington Fellows will participate in a six-week Leadership Institute at a U.S.-based university or college focusing on

business, civic engagement, or public management. The sessions will include professional networking opportunities, community service, cultural activities, academic learning, and leadership training.

The Mandela Washington Fellows will also participate in the annual Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit held in Washington, D.C., which will provide an opportunity to meet with U.S. leaders from the private, public, and NGO sectors.

The YALI program was built on the premise of young leaders strengthening their knowledge and skills at U.S. institutions, connecting with other Africans from different regions and countries in Africa, and ensuring young leaders can harness their skills and take them back to their home countries while strengthening their own business, public, and civic spaces.

The YALI Act of 2021 would also continue to allow the United States to support and help strengthen the Africa-based component of the program including:

Quality leadership training, professional development, networking, and online courses for Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni when they return to their home countries;

Opportunities for networking with alumni of the Mandela Washington Fellowship; alumni of participants at the YALI Regional Leadership Centers; and American and African professionals and experts; and

Opportunities through the United States Africa Development Foundation to facilitate professional development and sharing of expertise in the home countries of Mandela Washington Fellowship alumni and throughout the African continent.

Through the implementation of the YALI Act of 2021, the United States will:

Promote U.S. policy goals in Africa by providing tools and resources to help young African leaders develop important skills and connections through online campaigns and public diplomacy initiatives; and establish a system for monitoring, evaluating, and continued improvement of the YALI program.

The bipartisan support of H.R. 965 shows that this bill is critical to U.S. national security. It also highlights that our relationship with Africa is a priority, and we want to continue to rebuild and strengthen our partnership in trade and investment, peace and security, and human rights and good governance, because it is in the best interest of the United States and Africa.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I rise in support H.R. 965, of which I am a cosponsor, introduced by my friend and colleague, chairwoman of the Africa Subcommittee, KAREN BASS, to strengthen and formalize our Young African Leaders Initiative program.

The YALI program identifies and invites young leaders from across the African continent to participate in training programs that enhance their leadership skills. Among these individuals, some are selected to participate in the Mandela Washington Fellowship here in the United States.

I have met and spoken with YALI leaders who have participated in the Mandela Fellowship program through Rutgers University in my home state of New Jersey. They are the leaders of tomorrow.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, and again, thank you to Chairwoman BASS for her leadership.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 965, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

PROTECTION OF SAUDI DISSIDENTS ACT OF 2021

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1392) to protect Saudi dissidents in the United States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1392

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protection of Saudi Dissidents Act of 2021”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Jamal Khashoggi, a United States resident, Saudi journalist, and Washington Post columnist, was killed and dismembered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey on October 2, 2018.

(2) At the time of his murder, Khashoggi was living in Virginia under an “O” visa and was in the process of applying for a permanent residency.

(3) A report by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) found that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman approved an operation in Istanbul, Turkey to capture or kill Khashoggi.

(4) The assessment of the ODNI was based on “the Crown Prince's control of decision-making in the Kingdom, the direct involvement of a key adviser and members of Muhammad bin Salman's protective detail in the operation, and the Crown Prince's support for using violent measures to silence dissidents abroad”.

(5) The report also reiterates that “the Crown Prince has had absolute control of the Kingdom's security and intelligence organizations” since 2017.

SEC. 3. RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSFERS OF DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, AND MAJOR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT TO SAUDI ARABIA.

(a) INITIAL PERIOD.—During the 120-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the President may not sell, authorize a license for the export of, or otherwise transfer any defense articles or defense services, design and construction services, or major defense equipment under the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.) to an intelligence, internal security, or law enforcement agency or instrumentality of the Government of Saudi Arabia, or to any person acting as an agent of or on behalf of such agency or instrumentality.

(b) SUBSEQUENT PERIODS.—